Dreadful News FROM SOUTHWARK:

OR,

A moſt true RELATION

How one *Margaret Simpſon* Widow, together with *Elizabeth Griffin* an Infant of about a year and an half old, were wonderfully ſtruck Dead with a THUNDER-BOLT in *Ship-yard* in *Kent-ſtreet*, on *Munday* the 4th of this inſtant *Auguſt*, between two and three of the Clock in the Afternoon: The ſaid *Margaret Simpſon* having but juſt before uſed many Oaths and Execrations on her ſelf, about paying a Farthing; which 'tis believ'd was falſe.

WITH

The miraculous manner how the Thunder-bolt entred, and no place to be found where it ſhould paſs out, nor wound found on either of the ſaid Parties kill'd.

UPon ſudden Accidents men commonly paſs ſudden Cenſures; and for want of deliberate and ſteady Aim, under or over-ſhoot the Mark, eſpecially that kind of Mark, which the moſt skilful hand, guided by the ſharpeſt Eye, can never certainly hit, ſcarce diſtinctly diſcern. Therefore of Gods Judgements, judiciouſly ſays St. *Auſtin*, and modeſtly, *Judicia Dei nemo poteſt comprehendere, nemo certè reprehendere*, No man can comprehend them, no man may reprehend them. The following Diſaſter is as ſtrange a thing as ſhall lightly happen in ſeveral Ages; and ſome Circumſtances give us reaſon to look upon it as a ſpecial and extraordinary Judgment for Sin, but ſecret things

things belong to God, to whom we refer it, the matter was thus.

In *Ship-yard* in *Kent-ſtreet*, there lived one *Margaret Simpſon*, a Widdow, a perſon of a very ill converſation, as to turbulancy of ſpirit, Swearing, Drinking, *&c.* and as ſhe ſeldome paſſed a day without ſome quarrel or diſturbance with ſome of her Neighbours; ſo on Munday the Fourth inſtant, ſhe fell into a great paſſion with one of them, about a Farthing which the other demanded, and ſhe affirmed ſhe had paid; ſeconding the ſame with many horrid Oaths, Imprecations, and wiſhes of Judgments to fall upon her ſelf if it were not true. Though it is the moſt common belief of the Neighbours, and the other party doth ſtill firmly ſtand in it, that the ſame was falſe; and that notwithſtanding ſuch her deſperate expreſſions, ſhe had never paid it.

This ſtorm of paſſion being ſomewhat over, he went home, and being up one pair of ſtairs, where a man, his Wife and a Child living in the ſame houſe at that time were; ſhe ſat down, and took up the ſaid Child in her lap, being about a year and a half old; ſhe had not ſate long [illegible]ing her ſtory, but a conſiderable Tempeſt of Thunder and Lightning happened, and after three or fower Claps, there was heard one more near, and conſequently more loud than the reſt, in the midſt of which, on a ſudden, a Thunder-bolt (for ſo we muſt according to the uſual manner of expreſſion call it) came in near the Window, and in a moment ſtruck both the ſaid *Margaret* and the ſaid Child ſtark dead, ſo that neither the Woman ever ſpake word, nor was the Child heard to cry, or ſo much as groan afterwards.

It came in (as ſince by view of the place appears) through part of the Window frame, through which it had made a clever hole, but not above a quarter of an Inch over, or big enough to put in ones finger. On the outſide before it entred, it had garz'd along on the wall of the Houſe, being onely plaiſtered, and made an impreſſion

preſſion therein about a yard long, in a ſtrange manner, much as if it had been cut away by a broad Sword, then making its entry as aforeſaid, it likewiſe cut away a piece of the window ledge, about Three Inches broad, and then it ſhould ſeem did the fatal Execution on the Woman and Child who ſate near the window; but here it is wonderful to conſider the manner how it killed them, for neither of them have any wound about any part of their bodies, nor one drop of blood drawn, but both Woman and Child appeared to have received a ſtroke or blow, juſt much about the ſame place in either of them, that is to ſay, on the left Eye-brow, where there is to be ſeen a black bruiſe, of about the breadth and circumference of a ſhilling, but the skin not at all broken, nor the leaſt ſymptomes of hurt in any other part.

This diſaſter happened ſo ſuddenly, that the Father and Mother of the Child, though both in the ſame room at that inſtant, yet neither of them perceived any hurt done, till the Woman was faln down, and running to inquire the matter, and help her up, found both her and their dear Infant ſtone dead; which terrible ſight ſo affrighted the Mother, that ſhe hath ever ſince remained exceeding ill, and 'tis hardly believ'd will eſcape with her Life; but the man, though at firſt much aſtoniſht, is very well, and without any hurt: That which adds not a little to the ſtrangeneſs of this Accident, is, that though this Thunder-bolt, or what elſe you will call it, did leave ſuch viſible Impreſſions, and make ſuch an hole where it came, and muſt be ſuppoſed to fall in a ſloping line, tending downwards; yet there is no place in the bords or walls of the Room, where it can be perceived to have gone forth, nor are there any marks to diſcover what ſhould become of it.

Theſe ſtrange and ſudden Accidents ſnatching away ſinners in a moment into a dreadful Eternity, ſhould warn us all by a godly Converſation and getting an intereſt in the

the Lord Jesus, to provide for our latter end, that by what means or how suddenly soever it should happen, we may be prepared for it: But especially it should alarm all wicked and profane persons instantly to amend their lives, and particularly to avoid all profane Swearing and Cursing; and above all, to keep themselves from that abominable, though, alas too frequent custom of using Imprecations, Curses, and ill Wishes on themselves, on trivial occasions, and much more when they know the things they assert are false, lest, like this poor Creature, they be by an immediate Judgment, punisht by Divine Vengeance, and in the very Act (as it were) of their Impiety, swept out of the world.

The ingenious *Du Bartas* gives a notable Account of the Effects of Lightning; which seeming to give some light to this Narrative, I shall here insert.

----------Lightning of a Fume is fram'd,
Through's own hot drineſs evermore inflam'd;
Whoſe pow'r (paſt credit) without razing skin,
Can bruiſe to powder all our Bones within;
Can melt the Gold that greedy Miſers hoard
In cloſe-barr'd Coffers, and not burn the board.
Can break the Blade and never ſinge the ſheath;
Can ſcorch an Infant in the womb to death,
And never blemiſh in one ſort or other,
Fleſh, bone, or ſinew of th'amazed Mother.
Conſume the Shoes and never hurt the feet;
Empty a Cask and yet not periſh it, &c.

FINIS.